

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 AGRE-00

AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 EPG-02 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01

TRSE-00 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 NSF-01 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /125 W

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R 231348Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0785

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 4832

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS, GR, IT, TU

SUBJECT: GREECE AND ITALY TO SIGN CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT

1. DURING DCM'S MAY 21 CALL AT MFA ON ANOTHER MATTER (SEPTTEL), FIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS TZOUNIS REVEALED THAT ON MAY 24 ITALIAN PREMIER ANDREOTTI AND GREEK FONMIN BITSIOS WILL SIGN AGREEMENT DEMARCATING CONTINENTAL SHELF IN IONIAN SEA WHICH HAS BEEN UNDER NEGOTIATION FOR TWO YEARS. TZOUNIS SAID TERMS OF AGREEMENT WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO US AND "OTHERS IN THE AREA" BECAUSE THEY PROVE THAT "GREECE CAN BE REASONABLE IN SUCH NEGOTIATIONS."

2. REFERRING TO A MAP SHOWING AGREED-UPON DEMARCATION LINE, HE POINTED OUT TWO AREAS WHERE, HE CLAIMED, GREECE HAD MADE CONCESSIONS. IN CHANNEL SEPARATING CORFU FROM HEEL OF ITALIAN BOOT, GREECE HAD INSISTED DURING NEGOTIATIONS THAT MEDIAN LINE BE CALCULATED FROM ISLAND OF OTHONI, WHILE ITALINAS WANTED IT DRAWN FROM MORE SUBSTANTIAL ISLAND OF CORFU. IN THE END, CONFIDENTIAL

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BOTH SIDES AGREED TO WORK FROM OTHONI BUT GAVE IT ONLY 75 PERCENT OF USUAL EFFECT INDETERMINING MEDIAN LINE. AS COMPENSATION TO GREECE, DEMARCATION LINE IN OPEN SEA BETWEEN 37TH AND 38TH PARALLELS WOULD BULGE SLIGHTLY TOWARDS ITALY.

3. SECOND AREA WHERE TZOUNIS SAID GREEKS HAD MADE CONCESSION CONCERNED TINY ISLET OF STROFADHES, SOUTH OF

ZAKINTHOS. ITALIANS HAD NOT WANTED TO CONSIDER THIS UNINHABITED ROCK AT ALL IN DETERMINING DEMARCATION LINE, WHILE GREEKS INSISTED ON FULL EFFECT. COMPROMISE AGREED UPON WILL TAKE STROFADHES INTO ACCOUNT AND GIVE IT 50 PERCENT OF NORMAL EFFECT.

4. DCM CONGRATULATED TZOUNIS ON HIS PART IN CONCLUDING THIS NEGOTIATION BUT NOTED WITH TONGUE IN CHEEK THAT REAL CONCESSIONS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN MADE BY ITALIANS RATHER THAN GREEKS. TZOUNIS COUNTERED IN SAME BANTERING SPIRIT THAT AGREEMENT AT LEAST SHOWS GREEK WILLINGNESS TO PULL BACK FROM ITS MAXIMUM POSITION IN ORDER TO REACH AGREEMENT. HE POINTED OUT AHT DEMARCATION LINE WAS DRAWN TO EAST WHERE GREECE THOUGHT IT SHOULD BE IN STRATEGIC CHANNEL BETWEEN CORFU AND OTRANTO, AND THAT COMPENSATION FOR THIS CONCESSION HAD BEEN ACCEPTED IN "UNIMPORTANT PART OF IONIAN WHERE WATER ARE TOO DEEP FOR ANY MINERAL EXPLOITATION."
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